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J. DURAND, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

PUBLICATION OFFICE, 55 WALKER STREET.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE FORMATIVE ARTS.

(Concluded.)

IN Christian as in heathen times, the edifices of religion have always been the chief receptacles of the works of sculpture and design. It should be remarked, however, that the Christians possessed the rudiments at least of a sacred art, before they had any public temples. This arose from the circumstances of the infant Church. It had broken with the present world, which, it believed, would shortly be consumed in the flames of divine judgment; its inheritance was in the future; its home beyond the grave. Death was to it a nearer reality than life; and thus the cemetery became a gathering-point of deep and solemn interest, where the most affecting rites were performed—hallowed by the cherished dust confided to it—while believers still met for the ordinary purposes of social devotion—as locality or convenience might direct—in some private dwelling. The fraternal spirit of the primitive Christians mingled largely in their feelings respecting interment. To share in the hopes and privileges of their faith, annihilated with them every other distinction. The family burying-places, so jealously guarded by the pride of heathenism, seemed in their eyes an invasion of the spiritual equality of the Gospel. Brothers lay down to rest, side by side, in a common grave—rejoicing in their separation from the defiling contact of heathenism, and expecting together the resurrection of the just. Under such influences Christian art arose. While that of heathenism revelled in the forms of a luxuriant life, and shone resplendent in the eye of day, and invited to the delights of sense—it bloomed forth pale and unnoticed in the dimness of the tomb, and gave beauty to the memorials of the dead, and breathed the holy earnestness of religious reverence and trust.

Some obscurity hangs over the original connection of the subterranean excavations called Catacombs, with the cemeteries of the early Christians. But the fact is undoubted, that beneath the great cities of the ancient world—Rome, Naples, Syracuse, Alexandria and Antioch—passages of vast extent had been hollowed out, probably in obtaining sand and other materials for building, which served as places of retreat and burial for the adherents of a persecuted faith. The monuments of the primeval Church are most abundant and best known in the Catacombs of Rome—which stretch out under the suburbs of the city, generally in the direction of the ancient highways—especially in those adjoining the Basilica of San Sebastiano, near the Appian Way, to which the name Catacumba was at first exclusively applied.* The works of art

in these vaults—chiefly bas-reliefs on sarcophagi, and paintings in fresco or distemper on the walls—are of various date—the earlier being sometimes removed or effaced, to make way for the later: and by a contrivance not uncommon in the history of the Church, the remains of ancient martyrs who had perished elsewhere, perhaps only their names and memorials, were transferred to the Catacombs, to confer on them a higher sanctity.

There is no satisfactory evidence of these excavations being used by Christians for interment, before the beginning of the second century. During the tranquil interval, which marked the first half of the third century, Pope Calixtus enlarged and adorned them; gave them a more regular construction; and formed in them subterranean chapels, furnished with altars and terminating in conical roofs, for the celebration of religious rites. These additional works were called *Novæ Cryptæ*; and the whole cemetery, above which the church of St. Sebastian was built, acquired the name of Calixtus, and continued for a long time the chief burial place of his successors. We have an account of the Catacombs, as they appeared in the fourth and fifth centuries, when they had become objects of religious veneration, in several ancient writers. Jerome, when a boy at Rome, used often to visit them on Sundays with his school-fellows; and in a well-known passage, has vividly described their deep impression on his youthful mind.* Prudentius, in a more florid style, confirms his representation. The winding passages were lighted at intervals by apertures from above; on each side were horizontal cavities, arranged in tiers, for the reception of the dead, and closed up with marble slabs, on which were inscribed the name and parentage of the deceased, symbols of various form and signification, and particulars respecting the purchase and possession of the grave. At the back of the larger tombs, were placed sarcophagi—which are invariably of more recent date and subsequent to the age of Constantine. Extending to the front of the recess was a level surface, which answered the purpose of an altar, and sometimes of a table for the celebration of martyr-feasts or the memorials of the dead. In the unoccupied spaces of these niches, and on the vaulted roofs and the walls of the chapels in which, as in a common

makes its appearance about the time of Gregory the Great, at the end of the sixth century. To the thirteenth, it designated the excavated ground near the Church of St. Sebastian, and still later, the Crypt or subterranean chapel under it. Its present wide application to all excavations of a similar kind, is altogether of modern origin. See Maitland's *Church in the Catacombs*. Böstett (*Rom's Katakomben und deren Allerthümer*, in Platner and Bunsen's *Beschreibung der Stadt Rom*, I. iii. 3) observes, that the Greek composition of the term betrays its Christian origin.

* In Ezekiel, c. 40.

* This name nowhere occurs in the ancient cemeteries. It first

centre, the passages often terminated—were the paintings, now almost effaced by time, which expressed the feelings of the ancient Church and marked the faint dawning of Christian art.

It is very improbable, that these cemeteries were ever the ordinary places of worship—still less, that they were, for any length of time, the residence of Christians. They furnished, in seasons of persecution, a temporary retreat; and from the peculiar feelings entertained by the early believers toward their brethren who had died in the faith, they were the scene of occasional religious services.* Some martyrdoms also may have been undergone in them. We learn from Cyprian, that in 259 A.D. Pope Sixtus II. suffered in the cemetery;† but there can be no doubt that after the time of Constantine, when martyrdom was invested with the romantic glories of a bygone age, many vague traditions of this sort were attached to the Catacombs, which had no foundation in fact. Here the Eucharist and the Agapæ were sometimes celebrated; and from the occurrence of wells in them, over one of which was a representation of John baptizing in Jordan, it has been concluded, that here too Baptism was occasionally administered. Invested with so many interesting associations—their medium of intercourse with an invisible world—the cemeteries were an unfailling source of enthusiasm for the early Christians—where they renovated their waning zeal, and with mingling prayers and vows, in the presence of the glorified dead, inspired themselves with a higher courage and devotion to go forth and propagate their faith in defiance of persecution and death. From perceiving the effect of such meetings on excitable spirits, assembled by dim lamplight in sepulchral vaults—some emperors forbade the Christians all access to their cemeteries.

The paintings and sculptures which have been discovered in the Catacombs, resolve themselves into three classes, which bear internal evidence of belonging to different periods. There are first the symbols—single images, borrowed from nature or common life—such as the palm, the dove, the fish, the ship, the anchor, or the good shepherd bearing on his shoulders the lost sheep—which we find in the receptacles of the dead, depicted on the exterior slab or the inner walls—as significant of some idea or feeling of the Christian faith. With these are intermixed, signs of the occupation of the deceased—sometimes the implements themselves within the tomb—the axe, the saw, the prong of a crook—mistaken in aftertimes for the instruments of martyrdom, and made the occasion of many a harrowing legend. To these were sometimes added a kind of rebus, expressing the name of an individual, such as Onager, Porcella, Vitulus—by the figure of the animal bearing the same.‡ These representations must be referred to the earliest period; though having been once introduced, they

were perpetuated to later times. We must class next to these, historical types from the Old Testament—Noah, Moses, Daniel, Jonah, Job—expressing similar ideas, and having the same reference to Gospel hopes and principles, with the preceding symbols—and marking in this early stage of Christian art, a transition from the symbolical to the historical. Some feeling—perhaps of reverence, or of a want of fixedness in their own conceptions—seems to have withheld the Christians of the three first centuries from depicting subjects from the New Testament. These form the latest class of paintings in the Catacombs. The most recent of all, betraying an evident conformity to types that became fixed in the Middle Ages, are those found in the Crypt beneath the Flaminian Way, that bears the name of Pope Julius. These are referred by Kinkel to the 11th century; and it is observable, that here for the first time among these works of subterranean art, occurs the representation of a martyrdom.* Generally, in the Catacombs, Christ is depicted in his divine character—in his miracles of healing and blessing—as the hero of the new religion. Few scenes are taken from the common events of the New Testament; and the agony, the flagellation, the passion—on which the stern spirit of the Middle Ages loved to dwell—never appear at all.†

But the most remarkable and even startling fact connected with the Catacombs, is the constant occurrence of heathen symbols and images and forms of expression, among the undoubted memorials of the Christian dead. As the Christian Church assumed for its fundamental type the plan of the Roman basilica, so the earliest breath of Christian sculpture and design passed into heathen shapes, and gave them a new and higher significance. This fact is so clearly established, and with such an array of evidence, by Raoul-Rochette in his three memoirs on Christian Antiquities communicated to the Academy of Inscriptions and Belles Lettres, that it can no longer lie open to question. The proofs, indeed, are so strong, that some writers, unable to resist them, have contended that the Catacombs must have been used as burial-places by heathens as well as by Christians. This, in itself improbable, is denied in the most explicit terms, with all the authority of a thorough knowledge of the subject, by Raoul-Rochette.‡ Symbols supposed to be peculiarly Christian in their origin and application—the palm, the crown, the anchor, even the ship in

* Raoul-Rochette, Premier Mém.

† Kinkel, p. 203. The subjects of representation corresponded with the progress of theological opinion. It was after the Nestorian Controversy, that the Nativity and scenes respecting the Virgin were introduced.

‡ S'il y a une vérité démontrée pour tout homme qui a fait de l'observation des Catacombes de Rome, le sujet d'une étude sérieuse et impartiale, c'est que ces souterrains dans leur état actuel, sont exclusivement des cimetières Chrétiens; et ce qui n'est pas moins évident aux yeux d'un critique éclairé, c'est que tous les éléments de leur décoration, sans en excepter les marbres et autres monuments antiques qui s'y rencontrent, ont été appropriés à une intention Chrétienne, en recevant un emploi Chrétien. Troisième Mémoire, p. 241.

* See Prudent. *Passio Hippolyt.* 211 et seq.

† Epist. 80 ad Successum. Quoted by Rüstell.

‡ See Raoul-Rochette, Second Mémoire sur les Antiquités Chrétiennes.

full sail, and the fish—he has shown were already in use among the heathens.* Even where the elements of a composition were Christian, and taken from the Old or New Testament, the grouping and accessories were always determined by heathen types. In the family tomb of the Nasos, hewn out of rock in the neighborhood of Rome, the roof and sides are divided into compartments and painted with mythological subjects, in the identical style which has been adopted in the Christian chapels of the Catacombs. Symbolism—or the signification of moral ideas under material forms—was wrought into the very substance of the antique mind. It was the medium through which, on many subjects, the multitude conceived and reflected. It had become to them a sort of universal language; so that when any new idea entered their circle of thought, it was only by some fresh application or fresh combination of these familiar characters, that they could give it a visible expression. What was at first adopted from necessity or unconscious sympathy, was afterward retained from deliberate choice or the affection engendered by long association. Thus the types of heathenism passed into Christianity. Thus the transition was imperceptibly effected—a new spirit working under the same forms—from the art of antiquity to that of the new world which was conceived in the mediæval womb. In the Catacombs, says Raoul-Rochette, the ancient and the Christian civilization touch and interpenetrate each other: *c'était le dernier chapitre de l'histoire de l'Art antique.*†

Our limits will permit us to adduce only one instance of this remarkable accommodation. If there be any image, which we should *a priori* have concluded must in origin and spirit be exclusively Christian, it would be that of the Good Shepherd—so accordant with our conception of Him who came to seek and to save that which was lost—and seeming so naturally to reflect the meaning of some of his most beautiful comparisons and parables. And so the early Christians evidently thought. No image, if we except, perhaps, the fish, do we find more frequently repeated. To none are there more constant allusions in ancient writers. Tertullian, at the end of the second century, speaks of it as a decoration of cups.‡ But what is the fact? We meet with the very counterpart of this image in works of heathen art, long anterior to the Christian decoration of the Catacombs. Pausanias has described a statue, which he saw at Tanagra in Boeotia, the work of Calamis in the finest period of Greek art—the age of Phidias—which was evidently the original type. The same figure makes its ap-

pearance in the tomb of the Nasos, before referred to, surrounded by the emblems of the four Seasons. It occurs in other instances, mentioned by Raoul-Rochette, as an embellishment of heathen tombs; a circumstance which has puzzled the interpreters, and led them to regard the figure as copied from the Christian original.* The image of Orpheus attired in Phrygian costume, and playing on his lyre to the wondering animals, in the midst of scenes from the Old Testament,† is another example of adaptation to Christian ideas, which was, perhaps, favored by the strange intermixture of traditions from every source, put in circulation by supposititious works of various origin, like the Sibylline verses.

The ancients invested their sepulchres with cheerful and attractive images, and arrayed death itself rather in a gentle and soothing, than in a hideous aspect. The paintings in the Christian cemeteries have caught this spirit, and breathe an air of serenity and peace. It is observed by Raoul-Rochette, in a beautiful tribute to the character of the early Christians, that although these gloomy vaults were first occupied and decorated by them in the time of persecution and suffering, not a trace can be detected on their walls of the feelings of gloom and despair, or of malignity and vengeance. They seem to have been tenanted by loving and hopeful beings, who were glad of suffering in the cause of humanity, and looked on death not with terror but with joy, as the sure passage to a world of blessed spirits. It was not till Christianity had survived the reality of martyrdoms, that it began to delight in pictures of them—that its spirit became stern and gloomy—and Art, sympathizing with it, effaced the mild, benignant figure of the Good Shepherd, to make room for the darker images of the crown of thorns, and the bloody sweat, and the agony of the Cross.‡

* In a vignette appended to the ninth eclogue of Virgil, Heyne has given from the antique, a figure resembling the Good Shepherd as depicted on Christian monuments. Prefixed to the seventh, is another form of the same general type.

† Kinkel has given a lithograph and description of this painting.

‡ The writing, spelling, and other particulars of the inscriptions in the Catacombs, indicate that many of the Christians interred there, must have been of a very humble class, able to read only with difficulty, or perhaps not at all. Employing the usual hands for the incision of their sepulchral stones, who naturally followed the traditional forms, they were, perhaps, hardly aware what some of these really meant. The letters D. M. or D. M. S. are frequently found at the head of an inscription. In any other situation, it would have been at once seen, that this was the customary heathen form, *Dis Manibus*, *Dis Manibus Sacrum*. But as this occurred in a Christian cemetery, such a meaning was supposed to be impossible, though Mabillon, superior to the prejudices of his order, suspected it; till at length the Jesuit Lapi found the heathen form at full length on a Christian tomb. The Catholics had explained the letters, as *Deo Maximo Sancto*. Protestants, like Burnet, denied that the tombs belonged to Christians. Raoul-Rochette has furnished the true solution of the difficulty, by showing that the early Christians adopted heathen forms and heathen symbols to a far greater extent, than even Münter or Röstel had been aware.

A wrong direction was given at first to inquiries on this subject, by

* Clemens Alexandrinus (Pædog. Lib. iii.) in a passage quoted by Röstel (i. p. 391), refers to the heathen use of some of these symbols, and recommends Christians to wear them on their seal-rings in their own sense. It is stated by Raoul-Rochette in his second Memoir, that the image of the ship has been found in a heathen tomb recently opened at Pompeii.

† Trois. Mém.

‡ In two passages of his treatise *De Pœdiciâ*, c. 7, v. 10 (quoted by Münter, *Sinnbilder und Kunstvorst.* p. 60), with the disapproval, however, to be expected from his rigid Montanism.

In the meantime, the artistic tendencies of the new faith were not entirely confined to the dim chambers of the Catacombs. Beyond the limits of the stricter society, which adhered to the simple faith and practice of the apostles, there existed in the second century a numerous class of persons who united with profound veneration for the person of Christ and strong admiration of his teachings, an equal attachment to the speculative doctrines of some pagan school, and an unwillingness to renounce the fashionable tastes and pursuits of their time. These were the philosophical believers—Gnostics, as they were then called—whose influence, shading off the abrupt line of separation between pure Christianity and gross heathenism, was far wider and deeper, and left more lasting traces on the Church, than has been yet perhaps sufficiently acknowledged. These men imported from the lecture-rooms of the popular sophists, a great love of Art—and especially the reigning passion for collecting the likenesses of eminent sages and philosophers, which admiring students hung up in their chambers, and sometimes had embossed on their cups and their seal-rings.* Hence, it has been remarked by Heyne,† among the remains of ancient Art, we have so many busts of the chiefs and founders of different philosophical schools. It is not surprising, in the wide prevalence of the syncretistic spirit, that the head of Christ should find a place among those of Orpheus, Homer and Pythagoras. Every one who has read the history of the second century, is aware that the emperor Alexander Severus set up the busts of these eminent personages in his Lararium or private chapel, where he duly offered them mystic rites. The Carpocratians are the first Gnostic sect who are mentioned as having busts or portraits of Christ, which they pretended were derived from an original, once possessed by Pilate. The authenticity of the other likenesses associated with it, probably rested on no better foundation. Augustine speaks of one Marcellina, a follower

the circumstances under which the Catacombs were again brought into notice, in the Pontificate of Sixtus V., amidst the intense reaction of Catholic feeling, produced by the Reformation, toward the martyrs of the early Church.

The Catacombs were regarded as the resting-place of their remains, and every monument or inscription discovered there, was revered with indiscriminate enthusiasm, as deriving a sanctity from them. Cardinal Borromeo and Philippo Neri passed whole nights in prayer in these gloomy vaults; and water was fetched from their subterranean wells for the healing of the sick. Mabillon had expressed a doubt, whether this universal reference to the martyrs could be justified; but was compelled by the strength of Catholic feeling, in a second edition, to retract it. The protestants, disgusted with this superstition, but as much prejudiced in their way, were disposed to deny that Christianity had any connection with the relics and traditions of the Catacombs. In these divergent extremes of opinion, the true view of Christian antiquity was lost.

* This taste was long anterior to the second century. Cicero, speaking of the admirers of Epicurus, says (*De Finib. v. 1*), "*Cujus imaginem non modo in tabulis—sed etiam in poculis et annulis habent.*"

† Opusc. vi. *De Christi effigie*, etc.

of the Carpocratians, and a great collector of the images of distinguished men, heathen and Jewish—to whom he ascribes the general introduction of them among Christians.*

But the vast and overwhelming incursion of Art into Christianity, did not take place till after the conversion of Constantine. That event broke down the barriers which had hitherto fenced in the Christians as a peculiar people; and multitudes of worldly-minded persons, who had no convictions of their own, but liked to swim with the stream, at once embraced the religion of the State, and effected a fusion of ideas and sentiments, which, while it extended the nominal superficies of the Church, neutralized the distinctive quality of its vital principle. Heathen forms grew over and imperceptibly incrustated every manifestation of the religious life—often with a mere change of name, or the substitution of a superstition but slightly differing from that which they had anciently represented. To conceive of the process which now ensued, we must recollect how completely the whole life of the ancients was enveloped with Art—how its symbolism had penetrated into the very interior of their domestic usages, and had become from habitude less a luxury than a species of mental necessity. The walls of their houses, their furniture, their ordinary utensils, their rings and the other ornaments of their persons—bore witness to the symbolical atmosphere of thought and feeling in which they habitually lived and breathed. Cargoes of busts and statues—of every size and shape and significance—were regularly shipped from the ports of Greece for the cities of the West, with the same certainty of finding purchasers,† as the latest productions of Dickens and Bulwer, of Alexander Dumas and Eugene Sue, are now exported from London and Paris to the great book-selling houses of Boston and New York. Yielding to this resistless tendency, Christianity accepted the form and substituted its own interpretation.‡

The symbols and representations which had been hidden in subterranean crypts, were now brought forth into open day. Among other works with which Constantine adorned the fountains in the centre of the Forum of his new capital, Eusebius mentions figures of the Good Shepherd and of Daniel with the lions; and he further tells us, that in the most conspicuous part of the palace, the emperor caused the symbols of Christ's passion to be wrought in mosaic of precious stones on a ground of gold—as a talismanic protection of the imperial dwelling.§ The intermixture of figures thus unequivocally Christian, with others of heathen origin and significance—as the colossal statue of Apollo on

* Jablonski. *De origine imaginum Christi in ecclesia Christiana*. Opusc. iii. p. 377.

† See the *Charicles* of Bekker.

‡ Speaking of certain engraved stones, which exhibited the heads of Serapis and Jupiter Ammon—understood symbolically of Christ—Jablonski remarks: "*hæ gemmæ condocent, earum auctores symbola quidem Theologiæ Paganicæ retinere, sed ea ad Theologiam Christianam transferre, atque modo in scholis suis recepto applicare.*" *De origin. im. Christ.*

§ *De Vit. Constant. iii. 49.*

a lofty column in the Forum*—must be attributed in part to the lingering predilections of Constantine for heathenism, especially for the worship of Apollo—in part to the inability of the artists of that age to execute works at all comparable to those which existed in heathen temples, and which were therefore removed from their ancient sites to adorn a Christian city.

Of the subjects which were now employed for the interior decoration of churches, most were either purely symbolical, or else representations of certain passages in the Old Testament, which, from the prevalent mode of interpretation by type and antitype, were themselves understood rather symbolically than historically.† Some bishops in whom the anti-idolatrous feeling of primitive Christianity was still strong, were alarmed at these tendencies. Eusebius checked the eagerness of Constantia, a sister of the emperor, to obtain a likeness of Christ, and warned her against the danger of idolatry. In the same century, Epiphanius, a Cyprian bishop, finding a curtain before the entrance of some church in Palestine, on which was depicted the figure of Christ or a saint, tore it down with holy indignation, and ordered it to be used as a burying-cloth for the corpse of some poor Christian. But the movement of the age in this direction was too powerful to be long effectually resisted. The circle of artistic representations was constantly enlarged by the increasing reverence for the martyrs, whose sufferings formed the subject of a new style of poetry,‡ and in the churches were described with rival brilliancy of coloring and strength of outline, in orations pronounced by a Basil or a Gregory from the pulpit, and in pictures which glowed on the walls.

There is not a more startling phenomenon in the history of Christianity, or one that more clearly proves how the forms, and through them the spirit, of the old religion overpowered for a time its more spiritual rival—than the rise of a vast system of hero worship, interwrought with a mythology as wild and as baseless as that it had displaced—which for centuries misdirected and corrupted the mind of Europe under the name of Christianity. With literal truth we may affirm, that the *Martyria* now took the place of the *Heroa*—the legend, of the ancient myth—the encaustic pannel and mosaic, of the statue and the sculptured frieze. The Christians of the fourth century looked back with grateful veneration on the martyrs, as the authors of their prosperous condition, whose zeal and constancy had broken the power of the demons and overtured their altars, and erected on their ruins a new spiritual empire. The martyrs seemed, therefore, entitled to step into the vacated

seat of honor, and to become the objects of a secondary worship. The admiration of their sufferings which had so misled and perverted the religious zeal of their own age, was carried to a still greater height of absurdity, when time, drawing its misty vale over their memory, confused in one undistinguishable mass a solitary fact or a mere name with the cloud-creations of fable. We have sometimes thought we could discern traces of the uneducated ferocity of the Roman mind, familiar with spectacles of blood, and almost craving the strong excitement they supplied—in the evident satisfaction with which Prudentius and other writers of this period expatiate on the most horrible details of martyrdom—how the limbs of the sufferer were mangled and torn asunder—and how his friends collected them, and sponged up the scattered blood, and conveyed the sacred remains to their final resting place.* It is the transmigration of Lucan's spirit into a Christian form. The delight in these subjects produced an effect on Christian Art which it never lost, and darkened the bright and cheerful character of its earliest expression with a sterner and sadder hue. In a passage where Gregory of Nyssa minutely describes the circumstances which an artist had skillfully combined, to give vividness and reality to his painting of the last torture of the martyr Theodore, we could almost fancy we were reading an account of some dark and fearful picture from the hand of Caravaggio or Spagnoletto.† There are many proofs from writers of this age, that artistic representations were becoming a constant decoration of the churches.‡ They were considered as a sort of book that spoke to the eye, capable of acting strongly on the feelings and of communicating useful instruction. Gregory of Nyssa alludes to a picture of the sacrifice of Isaac, which he says he could never behold without tears. Gregory Nazianzen mentions a church built by his father, the walls of which, he tells us, were adorned with pictures true to the life; and Paulinus of Nola erected two churches in Italy, which he decorated in the same manner, for the avowed object of drawing away the people from the riot and drunkenness which attended the dedication feasts.§ As yet, scenes from the New Testament were not common; and when Christ was introduced, it was either symbolically under the figure of a lamb, or with great solemnity, in his human nature, bestowing the wreath of victory, like a judge in the public games, on a triumphant martyr.|| It was the tendency of Art, from the direction thus given to

* See the description of the martyrdom of Hippolytus in Prudentius.

† Oratio de laudib. Theod. Martyr. c. 2. The whole passage is given in the original by Gieseler, § 97.

‡ They were executed either in Encaustic (in which wax was employed as the coloring vehicle, and applied by means of heat—whence the name) or in Mosaic, which became the predominant style in the Basilicas of Italy, and, for its durability, was encouraged by the popes.

§ See the passages quoted in Münter, pp. 9 and 10.

|| He is so represented in a passage of Gregory of Nyssa, already referred to.

* See the description of it in Gibbon, ch. xvii.

† Before churches began to be generally ornamented in this way, images of the Cross, and other divine symbols, even figures of Christ and his chief apostles, appear to have been sometimes represented on the walls of private dwelling-houses, and embroidered on garments. Women gratified their love of display, and at the same time expressed their piety, by wearing robes on which some sacred history was inwrought. See Hase, *Kirchen-Gesch.* § 140.

‡ Such as the Peristephanon of Prudentius.

it, to become less symbolical, and more historical—i. e., to confine itself more to representations of human feeling and action, which were assumed as historically true; and this change is one of the signs of a transition from the classical to the mediæval period of Art. Nevertheless, the symbolical was still largely retained; and, as in works of heathen Art, supplied to subordinate, and sometimes the distinctive, accompaniments of the historical forms, which now began to be fixed in permanent and unchanging types.*

One consequence of the passion for representing martyrdoms, and, what next ensued, the most marvellous incidents in the history of Christ and his family—has been, that Christian artists, down into modern times, have more usually taken their subjects from legendary and apocryphal sources, than from the New Testament itself. Art, in the mediæval as in the classical age, has clothed in a visible shape the ideas of the popular mythology. The one is unintelligible without some knowledge of the other. As the vases and sculptures of the Greeks are interpreted by the fables of their poets; so the works of Christian artists must often remain in impenetrable obscurity, but for the light thrown on them by the Apocrypha and the Legend.†

In the earliest figures of Christ, he is represented as a beardless young man of noble and benignant countenance—rather embodying an ideal conception, than implying a conformity to historical truth—in harmony with the symbolical character and generally classical spirit of the first period of Christian art. Under this form, his mien and appearance almost remind one of the youthful Apollo. But with the increasing tendency toward the historical, and abandonment of the symbolical (by a decree of the Quini-sextime Council in 692, it was forbidden to represent Christ under the image of a lamb)—another cast of head became predominant, distinguished by the beard, and by features of more earnest and more majestic expression, for which, in the course of the 6th and 7th centuries, extraordinary reverence began to be claimed, not merely as a faithful likeness, but as the production of no human hand.‡ These

* Natural and celestial objects were symbolized by personification. Heaven, for example, was represented by a human figure with a veil expanded by both hands above the head (see a plate in Didron, p. 232). Rivers were expressed in a similar way. These symbolical forms excluded for a long time the landscape, which constitutes so beautiful an element in modern historical pictures. Particular symbols—as the palm, the lily, the lamp, the book—and particular colors, acquired in time a distinctive signification, and were appropriated to certain objects and persons, as indicative of their state and character.—Durandus, p. 64, 77, and Appendix E.—Didron, p. 145. See also the curious account by Sir Edmund Head, of a work on Christian Iconography, translated from the Greek, in the Preface to Kugler's Hist. of Painting, Part II., p. xlii, note.

† A thoroughly learned and caudal work on Christian Mythology, viewed in its connection with the history and development of Christianity, Art, is yet a desideratum.

‡ These likenesses were called *ἀειρονόμοι*—traced back, on one side, to the marvellous story of Abgarus, and on the other, to that of Veronica—and formed the nucleus around which an immense mass of legend accumulated. See Grimm's *Sage vom Ursprung der Christusbilder*.

feelings contributed to fix a kind of traditional type in the delineation of Christ's features, which has subsisted to the present day, religious awe forbidding any attempt at innovation in what was considered divine. These likenesses, founded on some more ancient type, which may possibly have come through a Gnostic channel from a heathen source—seem to have been first diffused from the convents of Constantinople.* The earliest—such as pretend descent from the picture said to have belonged to Abgarus—are marked by a strong Byzantine character. The monastic spirit of their authors will account for the unchanging uniformity of their expression. They resemble, in this respect, all the productions of a religious order, in which the free exercise of individual genius is overborne by the spirit of caste. A head of Christ, deviating in some degree from the Byzantine type, and asserting a derivation from a different original, was at a later period prevalent in the Western Church. Grimm has noticed the chief points of distinction between the Greek and the Latin variety. Both agree in their general tone of expression; and both become sadder and sterner, as they enter deeper into the mediæval period.†

Next to the proper deification of Jesus, with a subordinated system of hero worship, the most remarkable feature in the history of Christianity, as we approach the middle ages, is the rise of that extraordinary veneration for the Virgin, which exalted her to a Queen of heaven, and almost eclipsed for a time the worship of the Father and the Son. This extraordinary phenomenon—with a reference to the deep workings of a latent heathenism, out of which it sprang, and to its manifold effects on manners and on Art—opens a wide field for various speculation, on which our limits forbid us to enter, beyond this one observation—that, as the worship of the Virgin, in respect to the purer and more spiritual theology which it displaced, was undoubtedly a great corruption, so in respect to the actual mass of religious belief and practice with which it grew up, and of which it formed a part, it had a soft and humanizing influence, which it would be unjust to overlook and deny. Under the terrors of a theology dark with fear and gloom, in which the mild Jesus himself appears with up-

* Neither Eusebius nor Augustine had the slightest notion, that the heads of Christ, which were in circulation in their time, could pretend to be likenesses, grounding their opinion on the conclusive fact, that they were so many and so unlike one another (*innumerabilium cognitionum diversitate*), no one having a better claim than the rest. Several learned men have thought they could discern a resemblance between the traditional representation of Christ and the heads on some heathen coins, e. g., those of Antoninus Pius and Hadrian, and of Serapis, as already mentioned.

† All the great personages of sacred story, Paul and Peter and John, passed at length into a determinate mode of representation, fixed by certain limits and accompanied by unvarying signs, which made them as immediately recognizable on a first view, as if their names had been written over their heads. This, indeed, was indispensable to the use of pictures as a medium of popular instruction. See Durandus's directions for the representation of Andrew and Bartholomew, p. 62, Engl. Transl. n. 39.

raised hand and threatening brow, as *Rex tremende majestatis*, the believer fled for relief to the knees of the sweet and gentle mother of God, imaging in heaven the holiest of human affections, and looking down with an eye of compassionate love on a world of woe. In Art, her radiant image tempers the black horrors of martyrdom, and with a severe purity, which no forms of heathen beauty ever expressed, envelops in the mild lustre of feminine tenderness the terrific throne of her son.

It was the deep interest in the Virgin, which gave such prominence in Christian Art to the scenes of the Nativity, and the Annunciation, and the Flight into Egypt. Her immaculate purity also was theologically associated with the efficacy of the redemption achieved by her Son. Art, it may be observed, in consequence of its intimate connection with theology, which it helped to illustrate and interpret—took its favorite subjects from the two ends of the life of Christ: the events of his birth and his infancy furnished one series; his agony, condemnation, passion, resurrection and ascension, supplied the other. Here rose up the stupendous facts, on which theology reared its vast overshadowing system of doctrine: the intervening space, filled with wholesome doctrine and healing miracle, was too smooth and level to ordinary comprehension, and offered too few eminences for reflecting the distant rays of prophecy, to satisfy the demands of an imagination that could only see God in the startling and the strange. Generally, the choice of subjects from the New Testament was determined by their supposed correspondence to certain types in the Old; and the two series were linked together for reciprocal illustration with the systematic strictness of a theological treatise. This conception of the mutual relation of the Old Law and the New, modified the development of Sacred Art all through the middle ages, and influenced the selection and arrangement of the subjects which adorn the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and the Loggia of the Vatican.*

The whole of the medieval period from the 9th to the 15th century, was a period of the most intense activity in Art. Ideas were personified and made visible. The eye was more constantly employed as a vehicle for instruction, than the ear. The ancient dread of idolatry vanished; and step by step, continually translating symbolism into anthropomorphism, Art proceeded with a daring hand to depict under a human form the invisible Father and the ineffable mystery of the Trinity. At the commencement of this remarkable period, there was a last but ineffectual remonstrance of the old monotheistic spiritualism against the tendency that was insidiously working against it, in the outbreak of the Iconoclast movement in the 8th century. It was overpowered by the same secret influence which nourished the tendency itself—the genius of heathen art, still haunting the shades of the convents, and using its magic spell as a means of spiritual delusion. We must refer our readers to Didron's instructive book, for many curious illus-

trations of the action and reaction of Art and theology during the middle ages. We have only time for a few general remarks, necessary to complete our very brief and imperfect view of the subject.

The medieval mind was nourished by theological ideas, and molded by the priestly power which dispensed all the higher influences of the time. All objects were surveyed from a religious, or, more correctly, from an ecclesiastical, point of view.* The order of our modern philosophy was completely reversed. The world of ideas preceded in importance the world of facts, which was but a mirror to reflect the images of the former. Mysterious personages, whose heads, encircled with the nimbus, proclaimed them as belonging to a higher order of existence†—revealing their awful forms on the frescoed wall and the mosaic of the vaulted roof, or gleaming with a strange and spectral life through the rich grotesqueness of the storied window—spoke silently to the wondering heart and beckoned it away to other scenes. And the presence of these beings was everywhere interfused with all the objects and interests of man's daily life. Every church that reared its clustering pinnacles and lofty spire in bold and beautiful relief against the evening sky—every convent whose bell of silvery tone announced the hour of appointed prayer—every cross or tabernacled shrine by the wayside—every solitary chapel far up among the hills or embosomed in the forest shade—every well whose pure, cold wave had a healing power—were memorials of that spiritual hierarchy which kept perpetual watch over earth and shielded it from the assaults of the evil one. Thus actuality almost vanished from men's serious thoughts. Scripture was allegorized, or its plain narratives turned from their obvious meaning by legendary perversion and addition; while the outward world was changed into a mere symbol, a material veil of deep spiritual readings. The so-called science of the time had the same shadowy and unreal character; it dealt with assumptions rather than with facts; and while it perfected the instrument, omitted to collect the material: so that, to use the language of the learned historian of Christian Philosophy, "it seemed more the business of science to inquire what a thing symbolically meant, than what it was." Yet it was in this all-pervading idealism, that the inspiration of Medieval Art had its source. Men did not copy what they admired, but embodied what they felt and believed. The beings whom they portrayed, and the forms which they expressed, belonged to the mysteries of a higher world, and were objects of their undoubting reverence and faith. Allegory and symbolism, interwoven with the traditional types of historical representation, were the material links by which the ideal world was let down from heaven, and

* The Father was sometimes represented in the costume of a pope, with alb and cope, and a tiara of many crowns. Didron, p. 200.

† The nimbus does not make its appearance in the four first centuries of our era, and finally vanishes out of view at the end of the 16th. Didron, pp. 75-88.

* See Kugler's History of Painting, pp. 216, 277, with the notes of the editor.

brought into contact with the world of reality.* What Dante was in literature, the great ecclesiastical builders, and Giotto, with the painters of the Campo Santo, were in Art : their creations proclaimed their deep sense of men's relation to the spiritual and eternal, and embodied earnestly and faithfully the convictions of their age.

In the 13th century—if we may take the *Rationale* of Durandus as a fair exposition of its spirit—the symbolism of architecture was reduced to a complete system. The construction of churches and convents was contrived to express the doctrine of the Trinity ; and the subordinate parts and accompaniments of the edifice, such as doors, windows, fonts, were made significant of other articles of the Catholic faith.† In the centre, for example, of the great rose of a thousand leaves, which often illuminated the entrance of large cathedrals, was placed the symbol of deity ; while the concentric circles represented the hierarchy of worshipping spirits continually drawing nearer to the fountain of being and glory.‡ Toward the end of the 12th century, statuary began to be introduced in churches, and thus a new means of instructing through the eye was afforded.§ All knowledge was treated in the middle ages theologically ; and, therefore, even systems of science might furnish no inappropriate embellishment of an architectural design. The habits of mind engendered by the scholastic exercises of the rising universities, inspired a taste for systematizing the crude and multifarious elements of knowledge, which the medieval period inherited from the wreck of the ancient civilization. One of the most remarkable works of this kind was the *Speculum Universale* of Vincent de Beauvais, preceptor to the children of St. Louis—which embraced in a classification, Didron says, more logically exact and comprehensive than that of Bacon or the Encyclopedists of the 18th century, the whole field of human ideas—setting out from the primal conception of God and terminating in the consummation of time at the last judgment.|| But this vast work was not simply written in a book ; it was, if we may use the expression, translated into stone : and its various parts—nature, science, morals, human history—exist to this day, transcribed by the hand of the sculptor into the solid characters, which adorn with a mimic life the northern and southern entrances of the Cathedral of Chartres.¶

* Mens habes ad verum per materialia surgit,
Et, demeris prius, hac via luce, resurgit.

These lines were inscribed by the Abbé Suger, the architect of the church of St. Denis, on the western gate of that edifice, between the sculptures which represented the passion, resurrection and ascension, and those which expressed the last judgment. Didron, *Intro.*, p. vii.

† Durandus, *Intro.* to English Transl. ch. vii. Didron, p. 529.

‡ Didron, p. 215, who refers to Dante's description, *Paradiso*, c. xxx.

§ T. Warton's *Essay*, p. 14.

|| See Didron's very interesting account of this work in his *Introduction*, p. x. et seq.

¶ Didron, p. xv. " Cette statuaire est donc bien, dans toute l'ampleur du mot, l'image ou le miroir de l'univers." The four sides of the basement story of the campanile of the Cathedral of Florence were in like manner adorned with frescoes, from designs by Giotto—illus-

The state of Art, though fixed by ecclesiastical tradition within certain typical limits, could not wholly resist external influences, but sympathized in some measure with the changes of manners and the times. Speaking more immediately of the various artistic representations of the persons of the Godhead—Didron observes, that, from the 5th to the 9th century, their style is grave and austere, unrelieved by a smile ; from the 9th to the 13th, under the rule of feudalism, the forms are stiff, and the general expression tinged with a certain hardness and audacity ; from the 13th to the 16th, with the rise of the *bourgeoisie*, this martial character gives way to a certain air of familiarity and approaches the vulgar—the ideal, as he expresses it, falling into the real.* German art more particularly had always a tendency toward the burlesque.† Of the head of Christ in particular, Didron remarks, that from the 10th century downward, the bearded form of it almost entirely superseded the beardless, and that from the 12th—the era when the scholastic theology began to be cultivated—it becomes, especially in scenes of the Passion and the Final Judgment, continually more stern and severe. This awful character adhered to the representations of Christ to the time of the *renaissance*, and is depicted with a terrible power in the celebrated figure which Michael Angelo has introduced into his Last Judgment, borrowed, it is said, from an earlier design by Orcagna in the Campo Santo.‡

In the meantime, the age of freedom and a higher aim began to animate the pale and motionless uniformity of the old ecclesiastical art, in the republican states of Italy and the commercial cities of Germany—still, however, within the limits of a deep reverence for the grand outline and hallowed character of traditional forms—the study of nature, and what was yet accessible of the antique, furnishing the means—not of any new creation—but of developing in the highest perfection, that divine idea of which the inspiration was nursed with all the zeal of a true devotion, in the depth of the soul. Those who have studied the works of the oldest masters from Cimabue and Giotto to Perugino, speak of a severe, religious beauty pervading them—the expression of an idea within the mind of the artist—which no skill in drawing, or grace in combination, or magic of color, could of themselves replace.§ The golden period of Christian art, embracing the three names

trating the progress of human society from patriarchal to Christian times. See Lord Lindsay, il. p. 251.

* Didron, p. 210.

† Kugler, Part II.

‡ See the description of this figure in Didron, p. 243. Kugler, *Hist. of Painting*, B. v. ch. ii. § 67. It deserves remark, that the *Crucifix* (not to be confounded with the *Crux*) does not make its appearance among Christian symbols in the Latin Church till the 8th or 9th century. Thilo, *Cod. Apocryph.* p. 583, note. In the East, the first representation of it is said to be found in a Syrian MS. of the date 586. Kinkel.

§ A deep sympathy with the feeling of this early religious school of Art, and a just appreciation of its peculiar character, constitutes one of the excellences of Lord Lindsay's book.

which universal consent has crowned with the brightest glory—Leonardo da Vinci, Michael Angelo and Raphael—is of brief extent, scarcely exceeding fifty years, from the end of the 15th to the opening of the 16th century. These great artists came forth in the critical interval—separating an age of unquestioning faith from one of high cultivation and intellectual freedom—preserving still unenfeebled the spirit of religious enthusiasm, and at the same time offering it all the appliances of improved science and art, and all the treasures, as yet unripped, of a whole world of natural beauty—which stimulates genius to its greatest efforts and produces works of the highest order of excellence—where the informing soul and the clothing body—inspiration and technical skill—are in the most perfect harmony. Had they lived earlier, they might have felt an equal intensity of devotion, but would have wanted the same sense of freedom and of power; later, they might have possessed even ampler resources of execution, but the inspiring breath of faith would have been gone.

As it is—in their peculiar sphere—they dwell apart, unrivalled, unapproached; the lovely spirit of Raphael appropriating, with the felicitous instinct of genius, the most beautiful element of the old religion, and molding it into those exquisite forms of feminine tenderness and dignity which speak through the eye to the soul in the *Madonnas della Sedia* and *San Sisto*.

The Reformation produced an effect on sacred art, which nothing could repair. The spell was dissolved, under which genius had securely woven its magic creations; and the reaction in favor of the old faith, was as injurious to Art as the spirit which had caused the schism. The natural life of the old religion was gone; its free and graceful movements had ceased; and Jesuitism vainly attempted to revive a spectral semblance of them, by galvanic action on the nerves and the stimulating application of mystery and terror. The martyrdoms of the first ages were reproduced in all their hideous repulsiveness. At the suggestion of a Jesuit, a series of martyrdoms under the direction of Gregory XIII. was painted with horrible truthfulness, for the church of *San Stephano Rotundo* in Rome.* The division of painters, at the end of the 16th century, into the two schools of the *Naturalisti* and the *Eclectics*, is itself a proof that the inspiration of Art, in its higher sense, had departed. Mere copying of individual nature is not Art; and however great the technical excellence attained by the Caracci and other members of the later school, yet the very principle of Eclecticism excludes the exercise of proper genius, which always possesses a strong individuality—which cannot borrow and select, but must contemplate nature with its own eyes, and express, in all its productions, the one great aspect under which nature has a living affinity with its own spiritual being. The three last centuries are admitted to have shown no symptoms of a revival of sacred art. The modern religious school of Germany, justly admired for its fine taste and delicate feeling, still wants the vital glow of

originality. It is like the after-crop of Greek literature—evincing the highest cultivation, and familiarity with the best models, but shining by a reflected lustre rather than with native light.

If we consider the principles that have operated in the progressive development of the three connected branches of sacred art, whose history we have now passed in rapid review before us—we must come to the conclusion, that it is less appropriately called *Christian*, than *Ecclesiastical*, art; and still more, that there is no one period in the course of this development, which we can single out, as peculiarly entitled above the rest to the epithet of *Christian*. We have seen, that in architecture, as in sculpture and painting, the formative elements and fundamental types were originally heathen, taken up and applied almost unconsciously; and that for four or five centuries, the spirit of classical forms reigned so predominant in all the monuments of the new faith, that the most accomplished of our modern antiquaries* has announced it as the undoubted result of his investigations, that heathen art found its grave in the cemeteries of the Christians. The materials thus inherited, and organized into incipient life, passed into the hands of the hierarchy after the 5th century; and under the influence of the new mythology which replaced the fables of paganism, and blended with the more abstract doctrines of the clergy, assumed by degrees another character, and were molded into ever changing and continuously developed forms, expressing as they grew, from stage to stage, the inspiring idea of the dominant and all-directing priesthood. As that sacerdotal power worked out its plans and rose to its loftiest pinnacle of secular greatness and splendor, the arts which it cherished, ripened into the highest perfection admissible by the idea inspiring them—first, architecture—which attained its summit before the 15th century—then sculpture (though this has occupied a subordinate place in the sacred art of Christianity)—lastly, painting—which blossomed into its mature beauty on the very eve of the storms which changed the moral condition of Europe.† With the power that nursed, and the faith that inspired them, these arts faded away; and unless we can bring back that power and that faith, the attempt to revive them, in the form in which they once existed, must be hopeless. We may copy; but we cannot renovate.

Nor should this consideration affect us with pain, or make us feel that the world is retrograding. These arts, as they were developed by the medieval priesthood, attained a wonderful perfection, in reference to the end which they proposed, and to the idea which actuated them; but the end was limited, and the idea confined: some of the finest elements of the Christian faith, as it was first given to the world in the outpourings of the spirit of Jesus, are excluded by them. They bring the invisible world home to the mind, and make heaven a reality; they breathe the solemn sense

* Raoul-Rochette.

† The greatest artists, from Nicola Pisano to Michael Angelo, cultivated the three arts conjointly.

* Raoul-Rochette, *Prem. Mém.*

of a divine law ; and inculcate subjection to an authority that does not rely on brute force, but appeals to conscience ; and we would thankfully acknowledge the benefit which they have thus conferred on mankind, in effecting the transition from heathenism. But we miss in them that idea of the Infinite, which only the views of modern science can adequately unfold, and still more, that spirit of large and genial humanity which recognizes in all rational creatures, under every dispensation, the spiritual Church of God, and looks up to Him, through the mellowing light of these kind and generous affections, as the compassionate and loving Father of the universe.

We would, therefore, cherish, with the utmost care and tenderness, every beautiful monument of the past which has been preserved to us. Our time-hallowed cathedrals and churches, which have grown by length of years into a natural companionship with the everlasting hills and with the dark and dateless yews that shelter their sacred bounds—and which have softened down into the permanent, unfaceable features of our European landscape—with every moldering shrine and sculptured porch they contain, and every work of the limner's hand, that is suspended over their altars or wrought in colors richly dim on their windows—we would guard with jealous watchfulness against the hand of the spoiler, and look upon with grateful and wondering delight—as the records of a spirit now passed away from the earth—expressions of a trust and a hope that once sufficed for the guidance and consolation of a simple-hearted people in this vale of mortality : and where they are still applicable to the highest purposes of man, we would use them, as the first Christians used the symbols of heathenism, without any superstitious scrupulousness—as beautiful forms into which we may put a higher and more spiritual meaning—accepting, in place of that perfect accordance with the present and the coming, which they cannot express, the compensatory richness of those tranquilizing associations which remind us that we have a debt to the past as well as a duty to the future—and rejoicing in the link which thus visibly unites us with the high-souled and the gifted of the generations that are gone.

But where the object is to provide for present wants, or to respond to the feelings of contemporaries, it seems to us preposterous to go back for our inspiration to some idea of a past age, except so far as any portion of it may have survived into, and be now incorporated with, our actual system of living interests. Is it any longer possible to restore the spirit of medieval times ? And if it were, would any unprejudiced man of ordinary intelligence desire it ? The movements of Roman and Anglo-Catholicism, instinct with an artificial vitality secreted from books and not drawn from the healthful sources of reality, often blind us, we are inclined to think, to the true character of the time in which we live. We overlook the intelligence that flows silently on, and see only the inert mass of superstition that arrests the current with a ceaseless murmuring. The appearance of one such phenomenon as the *Cosmos* of Humboldt above

the mental horizon, with the previous changes it implies, and the wondering admiration and sympathy with which it is universally hailed—indicates a condition of the social atmosphere, which must forever prevent the return of such a composition of the elements as produced the Cathedral of Chartres or the Campo Santo of Pisa.

To rival in other, it may be, in higher, departments of creative energy, the perfection of the master works of antiquity, we must seek an inspiration from the present. We must revert again to the living fountains of Nature. We must open our minds without constraint, or fear, or prejudice, to the influences which surround us ; and where we conceive an object that is in harmony with man's highest well-being, apprehend it with distinctness, and feel that it ought to exist—bear upon it with the concentrated force of intelligence and will—of invention and moral power. Wherever we are in earnest, we attain to excellence. An elegant and sensible writer* remarks : " If it were asked which of the buildings of the present day bid fairest to command the admiration of posterity, I should answer, without hesitation, those connected with our railways." The reason is obvious. They embody the reigning idea of the age—material prosperity. They originate in distinct purpose, and are executed with a hearty zeal. But for the application of Art to the higher needs of the spiritual life, the inspiration of one great, clear, all-absorbing idea is wanting. It cannot settle upon the soul amidst the bickerings of a sectarian theology ; it can gather no strength from the petty, aimless researches of a superficial dilettantism ; nor ripen into Art under the capricious humors and ever-changing fancies of an over-cultivated and effeminate taste. The cure for these evils—undoubtedly a sign of spiritual weakness—must be sought—not in going back—falling again under the influence of priestly ideas and a superstitious symbolism—but in going boldly and resolutely forward—in taking the living idea of Christianity, that highest faith, that widest, purest love, approving itself alike to reason and to conscience—for the governing inspiration of our being—and under its influence, working through a true conviction, discerning the thing that has to be done, and doing it earnestly and well. We must set out from the *idea* ; around the *idea*, once distinctly apprehended, the form will grow of itself. When Christian faith and love again are warm and strong—predominant over material interests and selfish, mercenary passions—and pervade the hearts of multitudes—they will spontaneously, and as clearly as the vision of the future sanctuary filled the rapt soul of the prophet—suggest the idea of a Christian temple at once beautiful and characteristic, fitted to receive into its bosom the overflowings of the public devotion—not a soulless imitation of the structures of a darker age, adapted for spectacle and procession and dramatic effect—but a quiet, cheerful shelter for the soul from the hot dust and glaring sunshine of this working-day world—with its tempered light and graceful simplicity, and harmonizing

* The Rev. J. L. Petit. Remarks on Church Architecture, ii. p. 151

influence, expressing the peace of God and the love of Christ, and the mingling affections of human hearts. Architecture must always retain its place among the highest of material aids to devotion.

Whether the other arts of design can ever be employed again, to the same extent as they have been, in the service of religion, we doubt. They seem to us to belong to a lower stage of the religious life, when men must be addressed through the eye, and were less capable of sentiment and reflection. Yet we would not wholly exclude them. They might wait in the outer courts, and fill with a material glory the porch of the house of God. Arts of closer affinity with a refined intelligence can alone henceforth, as we conceive, adequately express the adoration and trust of man. A sisterhood of higher descent and more spiritual function—Music and Poetry—should alone be permitted, as we feel, to enter the most Holy Place, and will alone, as we believe, minister everlastingly at its altar, and on the invisible pinions of their blended harmonies bear up the expectant soul into the presence of the Living God.

ECHO LAKE.

A THRILL of music woke the slumbering lake:

She could not heard such riches in her breast,

But bade her guardian hills the treasure take

And bear it on till all the air was blest.

The hills, that stood in veiled and reverent ranks

To see her smiling in her thoughtful sleep,

Joined with the strain the chorus of their thanks,

Each in a separate answer, soft or deep.

And something of the lake's mild beauty went

Through the vast mountains on those lingering tones;

And something of their grand response, unspent,

Trembled around her ripples' eddying zones.

In thee, calm lake, still may the mountains hide

Their wealth of shadowy light and glorious gloom!

Let the lake's sweetness still, ye mountains, glide

On your great voices into airy room!

And ye, strong hearts, take up and bear afar

The echo of the beauty-burdened soul

Wherein your nobler selves deep mirrored are,

Till life to love a perfect answer roll!

LUCK LAROOM.

Sombre thoughts and fancies often require little real soil or substance to flourish in; they are the dark pine trees which take root in, and frown over, the rifts of the scathed and petrified heart, and are chiefly nourished by the rain of unavailing tears, and vapors of fancy.—*Boyes.*

Be careful how you put yourself at the mercy of critics or inferiors by going altogether out of your beat. Algernon Sydney tells us, that the king of Sabana was worshipped as long as he kept himself within the walls of his palace; but might be murdered with impunity by his subjects if he showed himself outside of it.—*Boyes.*

HISTORY OF THE EMPIRE OF KIANG.

PEKIN, July 20th, 1859.

Dear Crayon:

It is now five months since I sent you the last installment of the History of the Empire of Kiang. I fear you will think I have deliberately broken my contract, and that I am enjoying your monthly remittances as long as I can without sending you the *quid pro quo* in copy. Your readers, I have no doubt, are perfectly at ease on the subject, for, so far, the preliminary history of the Empire of Kiang must have proved dry reading to them. Indeed, it cost me many remonstrances with my systematic mandarins to persuade them to condense this preliminary part of the history. In fact, one of them, whose duty it is to translate from the antique Chinese into the modern vernacular, and whose services will now be entirely dispensed with, committed suicide some five months ago. But my greatest trial—the one, I mean, which has prevented the continuance of the history for the last five months—is, the absolute refusal of my mandarins to work during that interval. The reason of this is a foolish custom, prevailing in this country, which requires every man of station to travel South during the winter months. My employees all being mandarins, claimed their privilege, and as they could not take the library with them to continue their researches, the Empire of Kiang had to be discontinued. They all left with the exception of the one referred to above, who shuffled off his mortal coil to save expenses in view of a reduced income, a stroke of economy by no means uncommon in this country. Last week they all returned again to their accustomed desks at the library; and, as I cannot hope to give you the next number of Kiang short of a month, I propose to present to your readers a synopsis of the experience of my mandarins during their travels, as they related them to me over a huge bowl of tea the evening after their arrival.

Mandarin No. 1, who is a man of wealth, education, and refinement, a mandarin of six buttons, after paying his respects at court, and making a report of his transactions with the outside barbarian (meaning me), withdrew his family to a country seat on the sea-shore, and went to travel in pursuit of pleasure and information. The result of his studies he classified and brought to paper, and permits me to make abstracts for the benefit of your readers. The southern Chinese, he says, are more indolent than those of the North—they work less; but as nature makes up for their neglect by a lavish fertility of the soil, they appear to be as well off in worldly goods as the inhabitants of the North. They pride themselves, however, upon this, that they do not labor as hard as the people in more northern climates, and therefore think themselves better on that account. Great admirers of the ceremonial and the poetical forms of their religion, they incline to piety without being severe or illiberal. Their leisure allows them ample time for pleasure; and, as pleasure much depends upon society, they are hospitable to educated strangers, to men of information,